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THE FOLLOWING CHISINAU 000369 DTD 02APR08 SENT ACTION
STATE INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE REPEATED
FOR YOUR INFO 03APR08

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L CHISINAU 000369

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STATE FOR EUR/UMB

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MD](#)

SUBJECT: NEW MOLDOVAN CABINET: FEW CHANGES, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON
ECONOMIC REFORM

REFTEL: CHISINAU 324

Classified By: Ambassador Michael D. Kirby, for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

¶1. (C) This contains an information request for Embassy London.
Please see para. 5.

¶2. (C) Summary: The new 20-member Moldovan cabinet of Prime Minister Zinaida Greceanii, approved by Parliament on March 31, contains 14 holdovers from the Tarlev administration, five new ministers in established positions, and one minister in a new ministry. The new cabinet appears to have shed some dead wood, while promoting technocrats who have been effective economic reformers. There are five women in the cabinet, in addition to the PM. End summary.

Useful Old Hands Staying On

¶3. (C) The old and steady hands who have stayed on are Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Andrei Stratan, Minister of Justice Vitalie Pirlog, Minister of Defense Vitalie Vrabie, Minister of Reintegration Vasile Sova, Minister of Social Protection, Family and Child Galina Balmos, Gagauz Governor Mihail Formuzal (ex officio), and Minister of Economics and trade Igor Dodon, who was also promoted to First Deputy Prime Minister. We have had close and fruitful working relations with all of them. Mr. Dodon, and the new Prime Minister, have cooperated closely with us on economic and financial reform; Dodon's promotion to First Deputy Prime Minister indicates that the new government will give a high priority to deregulating the economy, removing barriers, such as corruption, to investment, and cooperating with us on Millennium Challenge Corporation reforms.

Replacements-Interior and Info Development Important

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¶4. (C) The important news on replacements is the changeover at the Ministry of Interior, where the powerful Gheorghe Papuc, who has proved difficult to approach and work with, has been replaced by Valentin Mejinschi, former head of the Center for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption. Another welcome loss is that of former Minister of Information Development Vladimir Moloden, a former KGB

general and crony of President Voronin; he has been replaced by Pavel Buceatchi, who moves up from Vice Minister at Information Development. The changeover from Victor Tvircul to Larisa Savga (another economic specialist) at the Ministry of Education and Sport is not an important change. The replacement of Ion Ababi by physician Larisa Catrinici as Minister of Health is something of a disappointment; we had fruitful relations with Ababi. (However, Ababi was eager to return to academia and he likely asked to step down.) Holdover Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Violeta Ivanov has been in office only since February 26, when her predecessor Constantin Mihailescu was sacked for corruption. Heading a new ministry, that of Construction and Territorial Development, is Vladimir Baldovici, an otherwise unknown company director.

Durlesteau from Court of St. James to Finance

¶15. (C) New Minister of Finance Mariana Durlesteau, who replaced Mihai Pop, was Moldova's Ambassador to the U.K. Post would appreciate information about her attitudes, opinions, and ways of working, if Embassy London has had any contact with her.

Holdovers with Less Impact

¶16. (C) Others who have stayed on have made less of a reformist impact, and have not played an important role in our bilateral relationship: Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry Anatolii Gorodenco, Minister of Transport and Road Management Vasile Ursu, Minister of Culture Artur Cozma, Chairman of the Academy of Science Gheorghe Duca (ex officio), and Minister of Local Public Administration Valentin Guznac.

¶17. (C) Comment: Like the Prime Minister herself (reftel), the cabinet appears to be a group of steady technocrats, who, President Voronin told the Ambassador in an April 2 meeting, have a mandate to improve economic conditions for Moldovans before the 2009 parliamentary elections. End comment.

Kirby

UNQUOTE: RICE